

Carrbridge Resident

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Dear Carrbridge Resident

CAIRNGORMS CAPERCAILLIE PROJECT

Plans for the release of further information about the project, publication and consultation on the Carrbridge Capercaillie Conservation Strategy, publication of the full questionnaire results and a drop-in event with project staff and senior members of CNPA and Board members have been interrupted and subsequently postponed by the unprecedented impacts of COVID 19.

Distribution of the Carrbridge Capercaillie Newsletter and the accompanying letter from CNPA to residents of Carrbridge was started on the evening of Sunday 15th. However, by the morning of Monday 16th events had accelerated and we deemed it inappropriate to be moving around the village door-to-door delivering letters.

The consultation was due to take place from 23rd March to the 8th May with a drop-in event in the village on the 2nd May. This has now all been postponed and we will follow the advice from Government around COVID 19 about when we will take this forward.

The Carrbridge Capercaillie Group reviewed their plans for publication of the Carrbridge Capercaillie Conservation Strategy and supporting documents for consultation and decided that... "In light of the current and exceptional circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic, we feel that this is neither the time nor the place right now to release it, as people's concerns at the moment, quite rightly, will only be for their health, their family, their businesses and their communities.

We also do not yet know how all of this will affect our community, and the community and our priorities may change; therefore we think it better to delay publication and review the strategy post COVID 19 to make sure it remains meaningful and appropriate. So we would

like to reschedule the date of release of our strategy and of the supporting documents for consultation to 30 June 2020.”

The CNPA wholeheartedly supports their decision in these exceptional and difficult times. With all of this in mind we think it is absolutely reasonable to postpone the process until a later date. We will monitor and consider the Scottish Government’s public health guidelines and work closely with community leaders to decide when the process can resume as per originally planned.

At the bottom of this letter are some key points that the CNPA wish to convey around some of the issues that people have raised that I hope this will provide reassurance and in due course we will come out and consult with people locally as per this letter. Further information at - <https://www.cairngormscapercaillie.scot/carrbridge-capercaillie-news/>

However, at this time other issues are far more important for local tourism businesses and residents and the decision to postpone this work reflects that.

Take care over the coming weeks and months.



GRANT MOIR
Chief Executive

Cairngorms Capercaillie Project

The whole project has been developing ideas and projects across five main areas of work:

1. Improving over 10,000 hectares of habitat;
2. Strengthening existing monitoring work;
3. Researching the genetic diversity of the Capercaillie;
4. Raising awareness of the current status of Capercaillie; and
5. Piloting a community-led approach to Capercaillie conservation in Carrbridge.

With regards point 5 above the recent surveys in Carrbridge both indicate that community members are interested in Capercaillie conservation, want to help and the majority want the project to continue to ensure our Capercaillie will always be here for future generations. However, we want to reassure you on a number of points that continue to be raised:

1. There are **no** plans, and there have **never** been any plans, to introduce byelaws or access restrictions around Carrbridge.
2. There are **no** plans to promote Capercaillie as a tourist ‘product’.

3. The CNPA does not receive funding from the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project and in fact contributes funding to the project. Five posts in the Park are currently supported by the project. Two are employed by the CNPA (Project Manager, Seasonal Ranger), one by RSPB (Capercaillie Advisory Officer) and two Gamekeepers are supported on Seafeld Estate and Rothiemurchus Estate.
4. For the next phase, the whole project is seeking £2.3million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver Capercaillie work **across the National Park** over the next 3 years.
5. The National Lottery Heritage Fund are responsible for reinvesting funds from the National Lottery into the country's natural and cultural heritage. This money can't be spent on other priorities.